

Experiences Marketing: A Cultural Philosophy for Contemporary Hospitality Marketing Studies

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EXPERIENCES MARKETING: A CULTURAL PHILOSOPHY FOR CONTEMPORARY HOSPITALITY MARKETING STUDIES

ABSTRACT

This article explores the landscape of contemporary hospitality marketing, it is argued that the teaching and academic discussions which surround the subject area adopt a predominately positivistic approach, and that although important does not adequately reflect the nature of the industry or the products we offer. Hospitality marketing predominantly ‘borrows’ from other traditions that have been formulated around the economic theory orientated exchange perspective. Such a metrics oriented position, although significant in the formulation of marketing strategy does not reflect the complex experiential, non-tangible nature of the hospitality product. This article presents a culturally located philosophy that reflects the multifaceted nature of the industry, the philosophy is underpinned by three precepts that draw from a multi-disciplinary theoretical framework to create the foundations of more subject specific approach to marketing that when weaved with traditional approaches can create a more effective and informed approach. Precept 1, argues that we must understand the nature of the hospitality product we are selling and the significance of this for the individual consumer; Precept 2, asserts that we need to understand the consumer, what knowledge, values and, resources they bring to the marketing process, to recognize that they are not un-reflexive organisms, but interactive participants who interpret, resist and find meaning within marketing communications; Precept 3, explores how marketers should be moral guardians and that we all have a responsibility for the impact marketing has on culture, society and the environment.

KEYWORDS

Experiences Marketing, Hospitality, Culture, CSR, Methodology, Market Research

INTRODUCTION

THE CONTEMPORARY HOSPITALITY MARKETING RESEARCH LANDSCAPE

This article explores the theoretical foundations of hospitality marketing as a recognized and distinct subject area and calls for a return to a more holistic and theoretical approach that provides a balance between the empirical and the conceptual, the business world and, society and culture. The result of this will forward the idea of Hospitality Marketing as a distinct and specialist area of activity that will allow academics and practitioners alike to forward knowledge and practice in the area. There has been an increasing concern about hospitality’s pre-occupation with positivistic tradition (Jones 2004, Williams 2006, Lugosi, Lynch & Morrison 2009) and the impact this has upon the scope and direction of hospitality research. The academic debates that surround the academic development and teaching of hospitality marketing, has been and, continues to be predominately informed by the overtly mechanistic and positivistic stance of traditional exchange paradigm orientate marketing theory. This approach is reflected in both textbooks (see Bowie & Buttle 2011, Reid & Bojanic 2009, Kotler, Bowen & Makins 2009, Hsu & Powers 2002)

and, the editorial policy of many tourism and hospitality journals. In a recent paper, Line & Runyan (2012) undertook an analysis of 274 articles drawn from Cornell Hospitality Quarterly, International Journal of Hospitality Management, Journal of Tourism and Hospitality Research and the International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management. Although the research demonstrated a range of area foci (2012:478) with the Marketing Environment accounting for 36.9% (subsumed within this category were Consumer Characteristics (8.8%) and Consumer Perceptions (28.1%)) and Marketing Functions equating for 62% of all publications (Category included Management, Planning and Strategy (19.7%), E-Marketing (6.9%), Public Relations (7.3%), Internal Marketing (17.2%), Demand, Pricing and Selling (10.9%) and Marketing Research (1.1%)). However, for the purposes of this article the interesting data surrounds the Marketing Research category in which Research Methodology only accounts for 0.4% of publications with the Theory/Philosophy of Science accounting for 0.0% of all publications. There is also a clear bias towards empirically based research with conceptual studies only accounting 6.2% of all publications and only 21.2% of publications adopting a Qualitative method of analysis (2012:480). It is interesting to note that these figures are comparable to methods of analysis found in general marketing journals (Hanson & Grimmer 2007). The consequence of this lack of conceptual development is twofold; firstly that there is a need for ‘...hospitality marketing scholars (to) begin to develop domain-specific theories as well’ (Line & Runyan 2012:485), rather than merely ‘borrowing’ theory from marketing. Secondly, in an academic world that is increasingly adopting a metrics driven methodology to assess the quality and impact of research, the overtly positivistic and empirically driven editorial policy of many hospitality journals marginalizes cultural theorists by constraining and restricting publication opportunities for conceptually orientated research. This sentiment is reinforced by Line and Runyan who go on to state in the concluding paragraphs of the article that;

...we identify a need for an increase in qualitative methodologies, especially for the purposes of construct development. We suggest that the dearth of qualitative study in hospitality research combined with the...lack of longitudinal data collection, has impeded the task of hospitality-specific theory construction. (2012:485)

It must be stressed that this article does not dismiss the significance and utility of positivistic informed marketing approaches, but that we move towards a ‘hospitality’ orientated approach to marketing that sees a greater weaving of ‘positivistic and interpretivistic logics’ (Peñaloza & Venkatesh 2006), that this weaving reformulates hospitality marketing to include and recognize the ‘experience’ of hospitality (see Tresidder 2011). The reflexivity of both the producer and consumer, individual subjectivity and the role of culture as influencing marketing practices. For the purposes of this article, hospitality is defined as a set of interlinked experiences that come together to form the hospitality experience, as distinct from Hospitality Management as a management process. Although marketing and many of the means of gathering information can be strictly defined as a process, it is argued that the knowledge that is needed to inform this should be drawn from a greater and reflexive understanding of the consumer’s historical, social and culturally embedded understandings of hospitality. As Scott, Laws & Boksberger state; “Exploring the ways in which experiences connect the company and the brand to the consumer’s lifestyle and place individual consumers’ actions and the purchase occasion in a

broader social context” (2009:108). The experience of hospitality is multidimensional and includes, food, drink, accommodation, service, the aesthetics of settings, buildings and locations and, even the brand or it’s values and equity (see Pikkemaat, Peters & Boksberger et. al. (2009) for an empirical analysis of the differing factors involved in wine tourism). In order to illustrate many of the theories presented here, this article draws heavily on the experience and representations of food and dining within contemporary hospitality studies, however the overarching debates presented here can also be seen to be transferable and that marketing texts actuality represent the hospitality experience in it’s entirety.

The philosophy for hospitality marketing studies that is presented within this article, reflects the recognition that hospitality necessitates a conceptual reformulation that has been motivated by a concern that contemporary marketing practices do not reflect the nature of the hospitality experience, that marketing and hospitality are the result of a collection of distinct cultural praxes that are largely excluded by traditional marketing approaches. These praxes are embedded in the individual’s or even consumption tribes’, social, cultural and geographical backgrounds, for example, the use of gender roles and representations of service in marketing texts should, and need to be adapted according to the social and cultural traits of the target market. Again it must be stressed that these positivistic orientated traditional approaches continue to perform a significant role and utility in the operational marketing of the hospitality product. However, the effectiveness of the approach could be enhanced by conceptual debates and, a greater cultural awareness that is underpinned by the further adoption of interpretivistic philosophies and methods. The philosophy consists of three precepts or constituents; firstly, is the recognition of the significance of the hospitality experience and how this needs to be embedded/recognized as the core of the experience/product being offered, thus building on the work of Scott, Laws & Bockberger (2009). Secondly, is to recognize that the consumer is a reflexive freethinking individual that brings with them a set of individual values and a personal social and cultural biography that will inform the relationship to the product and ultimately their interpretation of marketing communications. Finally, traditionally, marketers have used the concept of the ‘sovereign consumer’ as a means to absolve themselves of responsibility for the negative human and environmental damage associated with the consumption of the products, trends or experiences they have promoted. It is argued that the industry needs to take responsibility for their actions and to also recognize the link between the development of a more ethical/sustainable approach to hospitality marketing, and how this contributes to the heightened experience for many consumers.

A PHILOSOPHY FOR HOSPITALITY MARKETING

PRECEPT 1: THE EXPERIENCE OF HOSPITALITY (UNDERSTANDING YOUR PRODUCT)

Precept 1, reinforces the assertion that hospitality marketing needs to be developed around an in-depth understanding of the product, it is only once this has been achieved can there be a clear and effective interrelationship between the product and promotion or communication of the experience of hospitality. The hospitality product is not merely a management process; it is more than the collection of services that results in the offering of sustenance and shelter (Jolliffe 2006). Hospitality becomes a means of reinforcing group and individual identity (Fonseca 2008); it

reflects our position in society and, becomes the manifestation of a cultural expression (Gvion & Trostler 2008). It enables us to take on different roles, to celebrate, to wallow in hedonistic zones in which we find and search for pleasure (Fantasia 1995). Hospitality marketing research is still largely informed by a preoccupation with the various aspects of Product, Price, Place and Promotion in varying forms of analysis and application. The dominant approach to hospitality marketing continues to revolve around almost purely practical measures, for example in this quote taken from Kotler et. al. (2009:51)

Service marketers should take steps to provide their prospective customers with evidence that will help tangibilize the service. A hotels' promotional material might include a meeting planner's packet, containing photographs of the hotel's public area, guest rooms and meeting space.

The provisions of materials makes the hospitality product tangible on consumption, however it can also be asserted that tangibility can also be created on the metaphysical plane by utilising and creating a semiotic language of hospitality at the pre-physical consumption level within marketing communications. That is, within marketing texts, a form of language that consists of a very particular set of words and images and contextual structures that offers the consumer/reader the promise of experiences such escape, authenticity (of experience and emotions), luxury, hedonism to mention only a few, in a way it may be seen as the buying and selling of dreams. An example of this is the marketing convention of using an empty table to signify fine dining, if the table was full of guests this may distract or provide a boundary (by signifying the experience belongs to a type of person or to a social class or culture) to the metaphysical consumption of the promised experience. In order to achieve this level of understanding and application within practice it is necessary to understand how hospitality is consumed at the social and cultural level, whereby the consumption of the hospitality experience commences at the initial interaction with the marketing text.

The concept of experience within marketing is a complex one and is open to many different interpretations and definitions (Volo 2009, Jennings, Young-Sook & Ayling et.al. 2009). Carù & Cova (2003) usefully explore the various approaches to the definition of experience outside of what they call 'management science' (269) of which traditional marketing studies is part of. For example;

... in science an experience is similar to an experiment based on objective facts and data that can be generalized...For Philosophy, an experience is a personal trail which generally transforms the individual...For sociology and psychology, an experience is a subjective and cognitive activity which allows the individual to develop.(Carù & Cova 2003:281)

From this view Carù & Cova have identified two significant and emerging trends within experiential marketing. Firstly, that any consumption experience is dependent on acquiring goods and services from the market and, secondly and, most significantly for this paper, is that there is a romantic trend that over signifies the extraordinariness of consumption. However, although the romanticizing of experience may be seen as a negative development, yet it remains a marketing convention that is widely used in hospitality and food marketing campaigns (Tresidder 2010b).

In the context of hospitality studies Lugosi (2008) offers an interesting overview of the forms and manifestations of hospitality, he classifies these into three distinct categories. Meta-Hospitality, The offer of hospitality for social and political purpose and the offer of hospitality within the commercial sphere whereby, hospitality provides for basic human needs. He attributes experiential and transaction characteristics to each of these categories, whereby for example, meta-hospitality is an existential experience with a high level of emotion transaction and takes place infrequently. Although it could be argued that the form and frequency occurrence should temper the level of emotion or metaphysical enjoyment, the significance of the experience will be dependent upon the individual's personal experiences. For example, a visit to a fast food restaurant for some may be directly linked to price and availability and is just providing food for fuel, thus classified as a mundane experience, for other consumers it may be an infrequent treat or reward or an experience that evokes memories of family and childhood etc. In short for some it is mundane, for others it is rich with significance, and the nature of experience and transaction will depend not just on their demographical profile, but also their own personal biography and the consumer resources they possess. Alternatively the formality of dining at a Michelin Star restaurant or engaging in 'Meta-Hospitality Experience' for many would not be experienced as an extraordinary event but rather as a terrifying one. This analysis can also be seen to be applicable to many other papers that have attempted to provide a definitive framework for understanding experience in tourism and hospitality (Quan & Wang 2004, Gilmore & Pine 2002), this view is clearly support by Walls, Okumus, Wang & Kwun's epistemological view of consumer experiences (2011). As such, it is difficult to define exactly what we mean by experience and to classify these into some form of typology or model and the significance that is drawn reflexively from the hospitality experience by the individual. However, the significance of understanding the hospitality experience in informing strategic managerial decisions within the hospitality sector cannot be underestimated. Scott, Laws & Boksberger (2009:107) call for the shift from experience being defined as something intrinsic to the visitor to a managerial approach in which experience is designed and co-created by the visitor and the supplier.

The development of a conceptual framework that explores the cultural and social significance of the hospitality experience, how practices are the product of political, religious and historical events and how the concept of philosophy of hospitality becomes internalized by the consumer becomes a key tool in creating effective marketing campaigns and approaches as it enables us both as academics and practitioners to explore the different factors that inform the consumer's interaction with marketing texts and how they find meaning and reflexively explore the hospitality experience. The next section explores some of the conceptual themes that can be used to enhance and inform marketing systems.

Precept 1 Conceptual Themes

- **Historical Foundations:** Often our understanding of the significance of food and hospitality has become embedded within contemporary society and individual cultures as the direct result of historical traditions. The relationship between the host and guest and the idea of 'breaking bread' in the Christian tradition (Carvalhaes 2010) or the Islamic caravanserai's who provided food shelter for pilgrims and travellers and still continues today (Bryce, O'Gorman

& Baxter 2013) are timeless and significant examples of how the significance of hospitality has been formed. While Russo (2012) explores the idea of hospitality providing ‘intimacy of the home’, the idea that hospitality crosses cultures has been extensively explored. Understanding these traditions enables the marketer to appreciate both the significance and iconography of particular food traditions (see Allen 1994, Tannahill 2002, Fernandez-Armesto 2002, Korsmeyer 2005, O’Gorman 2007), it enables us to develop effective marketing campaigns that locate the hospitality experience within a time and space that is appealing to consumers when they are faced with the uncertainty of post-industrial society, concerns about the origins of food (Andrews 2008) and, shifting global economic priorities. Links to the past and, utilizing historical discourses creates a conceptual theme within current marketing that forwards messages about the authenticity (Dawkins 2009) of product, production and service, it offers a glimpse into a world that appears more real and organic (Tresidder 2010b, 2011). This conceptual marketing theme offers hospitality and as refuge from the vagaries of the post-modern world (Delind 2006 see also Berger 2011).

- **Hospitality as Escape:** The idea of hospitality marketing concentrating on offering products and experiences the idea of hospitality as creating a refuge from the post modern world through the creation of a semiotically represented ‘servicescape’ in which hospitality marketing offers the individual constructed escape hatches (Uzzell 1984). The notion of escape takes on many forms and includes debates that include authenticity (Lashley 2007, Beer 2008, Muñoz & Wood 2009, Atwal & Williams 2011), cultural expression (Reed-Danahay 1996, Law 2001, Mason & Mahoney 2007, Gvion & Trostler 2008, Dawkins 2009) and hedonism or luxury (Gillespie & Morrison 2001, Webster & Rennie 2011). Hospitality marketing offers access to a world that is differentiated from the ordinary mundane activity of existing in which it is possible to be a king or queen for a day, or through the consumption of a burger, enter into the American dream.
- **Hospitality as Sacred:** Hospitality marketing is underpinned by a set of conventions that presents hospitality and food in a specific way that differentiates representations of time and space by elevating the represented experience to that of the extraordinary. This convention is witnessed in all sectors of the hospitality industry and acts as a means of reinforcing the binary relationship between the everyday and the extraordinary. This approach can best be understood by examining Durkheim’s (1995) conception of the ‘sacred and profane’ (see Belk et al 1989 for discussion of the relationship between marketing and the sacred). Hospitality marketing becomes one of the methods by which the consumer embodies their experiences of the social it becomes a cognitive, imaginative space in which everyone can access the things that mark off the social from the private (Couldry 2001:158), it can be contended that marketing constructs a lens that is ordered with marketing communications. Resultantly, hospitality marketing denotes the division between social and ordinary experiences, or in other words the sacred and profane. For Durkheim (1995) the hypothesis of the sacred and profane are socially engendered and underscore the dissimilarity between social and ordinary experiences. Caillouis (1988:20) recognised that the two worlds of the

sacred and profane do not mingle in unmediated ways, and are the result of reconstituted rituals and rites of passage, and can be witnessed within the marketing practices (Belk et al 1989). This is clearly illustrated in hospitality marketing, as there is clearly a ritualistic aspect to hospitality service, such as the formal laying of the table, the order of the consumption of food, both of which are used as basis of communicating the hospitality experience. It is this ritualistic element that reinforces the extraordinary (Genosko 2003) or 'sacred sphere of excess' (Caillois 1988:282) that envelops contemporary marketing practices. A major theme of experiences marketing is that it is not the everyday (Belk et al 1989), it is a means of escape from our everyday lived experience of working, cooking the daily meal, utilitarian shopping and washing the dishes. By adopting Caillois' view in 1940, that the sacred had shifted from celebration at the societal level to, 'individualized isolated experiences' (Genosko 2003:76), whereby the entry into the extraordinary sacred world of hospitality marketing becomes an personal mission in which the individual can discover value and escape.

- **The Language of Hospitality:** As stated previously in this article, conventional discussions of hospitality marketing have relied upon the 'borrowing' of approaches from more mainstream marketing traditions. The understanding of the hospitality experience allows us to identify particular themes that need to permeate hospitality communications, such as the cultural positioning or embedding of the hospitality experience and, examining how this can be effectively communicated and located within promotional texts. Effective communication relies on the reader or consumer understanding both the meaning and the significance of the marketing message being transmitted, one of the methods for understanding this process is the study of the semiotic representations and the significance of the signifying element of the words and images used in marketing texts. What can be argued is that there are a definitive set of images such as the use of restaurant gardens (representing organic/authentic), the empty set table (representing fine/formal dining and quality) and words that possess hospitality specific meanings and focus on themes such a luxury, service, authenticity and experience. As such it is important that we can explore and understand this language and how it can be incorporated into marketing practice. This language can be built by understanding the semiotic conventions (layout, representations of history, heritage, culture) and the experience of hospitality (as identified above). It has been recognised that the use and understanding of semiotics within marketing, enables the practitioner to take a more focused approach to developing brand and product identity (Koranda 2009, Lencastre & Côte-Real 2010, Oswald 2012). Although there has been some development of semiotics in the area of Hospitality (Tresidder 2011) it is still limited in its application. However, in tourism studies the significance of semiotics is becoming increasingly recognised as a specialist area of activity, with a growing number of advocates identifying the various applications and impacts the study semiotics may have upon informing consumer behaviour, the structure and nature of marketing communications and how the individual consumer are actually quite skilled semioticians (see Pennington & Thomsen 2010, Tresidder 2010a, Berger 2011, Volo 2012, Knudsen & Rickly-Boyd 2012). It is important that as a subject area that we are open to the ideas, contrasting views and analytical tools that

the social sciences or literary disciplines offer, and although these may be heavily interpretative it can still add value and knowledge to industry and academic marketing practices and approaches.

Precept 2 The Consumer as an Individual

This section explores the role of the individual and how they make sense, interpret and find meaning within hospitality marketing. Traditionally the consumer is treated as part of a homogenized mass lumped together as an identifiable market segment. This section argues that in order to be truly effective we need to move away from this predominately quantitative orientated approach to marketing to a more culturally aware method in which the consumer becomes central, and that marketers understand how consumers consume, interpret and find meaning within marketing communications. Although multidimensional methods of segmentation, which mix for example, psychographic and behavioral characteristics continue to provide important data in recognizing consumption traits, patterns and trends. The multidimensional approach still often resides in what Carù & Cova (2003) refer to as business science, and as such is embedded in a very quantitative tradition, this approach could be further enhanced by further interaction with other social scientific disciplines to become truly multidimensional. Consequently, it is important that we understand the nature of consumption, how individual interacts with and negotiate membership within consumption tribes or within an identified habitus group and the significance of the hospitality experience for the individual. The consumer's relationship between consumption, cultural, capital and habitus becomes a social marker of who we are or who we wish to be. Additionally this section explores how the individual interprets and finds meaning within marketing communications.

- **Consumer Resources:** The way in which the individual consumer interacts with the hospitality product is dependent upon the personal resources they possess. Apart from the more tangible resources such as finance, time and space, it is also important that we understand the relationship between the resource of knowledge and the relationship the consumer will have to the marketing process and marketing communications. The idea of knowledge of the hospitality product is not an area that has been explored, rather, assumptions are often made through generalised suppositions generated by quantitatively formulated approaches to segmentation. Each of us has a set of specializations or knowledge that enables us to express ourselves through the consumption or resistance to consumption (Kozinets 2002), the way in which the hospitality product is positioned or communicated makes certain assumptions about the knowledge of our potential customer. Therefore we need to move from an almost metrics driven approach to a more innovative hybrid that includes truly understanding the nature of our customer. Goulding & Saren (2009) in their study of a Goth festival in Whitby identified that 'experience of consumption' is the result of specialist consumer knowledge and consumer practices. Thus in order to effectively create or generate experience within hospitality marketing it becomes increasingly important to recognize the link between knowledge and hospitality practices. We can think of the individual knowledge we

possess as part of our personal biography and is the result of our social, cultural, geographical and experiential background and, subsequently influences how the individual reacts or understands marketing communications.

- **Knowledge, Identity and Consumption:** The consumer's relationship and their consumption practices to hospitality rely heavily on their own personal depository of cultural knowledge. This difference from knowledge as a resource is how the individual utilizes their knowledge of products and how consumption becomes a social marker of who they are or, who they wish to be (Allen & Anderson 1994, Tresidder & Hirst 2012). For example the ability to negotiate a wine list results in not only the consumption of a bottle of wine, but also an opportunity and means to express the consumers knowledge of wine and an expression of their knowledge, education and sophistication and ultimately reinforcing their membership of a particular consumption tribe (Cova & Cova 2001, Cova, Kozinets & Shankar 2007) or habitus (see Bourdieu 1987). Thus, the consumption of the hospitality product is a complex cultural activity and consumption is in fact a multifaceted process that is understood and engaged in by the consumer (Schau 2000). As such, the marketing of hospitality needs to offer a conduit in which individuals may express and utilize their cultural capital (Holt 1998) rather than identifying the hospitality product within a one-dimensional consumption framework.
- **Understanding the Process of Interpretation:** It is interesting to note in the Line & Runyan (2012) article that the Theory/Philosophy of Science accounted for 0.0% of all publications. This analysis leads to a number of interesting conclusions; firstly that although a great number of journal papers present a methodology within them, there is a demonstrable positivistic slant within hospitality marketing research, and secondly that there is a lack of philosophical debate within the marketing literature that challenges this approach. Our individual epistemological, ontological and axiological foundations directly influence the interpretation of marketing communications and the relationship we have to hospitality products or experiences. As individuals the interpretation of marketing texts is directly influenced and directed by our own set of values, beliefs and 'knowledges', this area has been extensively developed in tourism studies (see Botterill. 2001, Phillimore & Goodson 2004). As such, the effective marketing of hospitality products relies on understanding how the individual consumer interprets and negotiates the marketing message (Tresidder 2011, Tresidder & Hirst 2012). The failure to address these philosophical considerations has both theoretical and practical implications. For example, in order to synchronize the values and brand values of companies with the values of the customer (Jones, Comfort & Hillier 2005), we must explore their axiological foundations and ontological view of the world in order to understand what values they hold and how they were formed in order to effectively create marketing approaches. There is also clear evidence that consumers gain some form of added pleasure from engaging with companies that reflect their own

value systems (Moisander 2007) the sharing of values between the two parties is another dimension to the consumption process (Golding & Peattie 2005, Young et.al. 2010) and increases the probability of loyalty and repeat visits. The same can also be said of understanding the individual's or culture's epistemology or paradigmatic foundations, by exploring and understanding the epistemological foundations of our customers then we understand who they are in a philosophical sense, and how they will interact with CSR strategies, thus ensuring a sustainable 'Triple Bottom Line'. Therefore, the exploration of epistemological, ontological and axiological considerations is more than just a theoretical philosophical journey, it is information about both the company's and the individual's position in the world that can and should inform marketing strategy. From an academic point of view the development of hospitality studies is reliant on a greater understanding of the conceptual and philosophical analysis of the industry, the fixation with quantitatively and empirically based work often stifles such debates and the subject is poorer for this.

Precept 3 The Marketer as Moral Guardian:

There is a philosophical and ethical paradox that underpins all exchange-orientated marketing, where by the major goal of marketing is to influence consumers to buy your product, to consume more to increase profits, while ethical and sustainability consumption promotes moderation and restraint. However, as Carrigan & Attalla state, "Increasing awareness of sustainability and green issues, but it is harder to ignore the 'ethics gap' between what society expects and what marketing professionals are delivering (2001:561). Thus as part of contemporary marketing practice both practitioners and theorists are duty bound to critically examine the impacts of hospitality marketing have upon the commodification of social, cultural and physical environments that are utilized within the hospitality industry. Traditionally marketers have used the concept of the 'sovereign consumer' as a response to criticism about generating needs and wants, Firat, Dholakia & Venkatesh (1995:42) state that, 'The sovereign consumer is idealized and idolized...' by the capitalist world and that the concept of the sovereign consumer as generating demand, rather than the marketer or marketing, as such the Sovereign Consumer became means to absolve themselves of responsibility for the negative human and environmental damage caused by the consumption of the products or experiences that have been promoted. It is argued that the industry needs to take responsibility for their actions, to also recognize the link between the development of a more ethical/sustainable approach to hospitality marketing and, how this contributes to the heightened experience for many consumers. Marketers seduce or persuade the consumer by offering them access into a hedonistic world of excess that is inherent in the marketing language of hospitality. As Deighton & Grayson (1995:660) state in their exploration of the relationship between marketing and ;

The paradox of seduction is that it induces consumers to enjoy things they did not intend to enjoy. It does so because the marketer entices the consumer to abandon one set of social agreements and collaborate in the forging of another, often incompatible sets that then serve to govern the relationship, its value, and the satisfaction it can yield.

The result of this is to seduce or persuade consumers to engage in unhealthy food choices (Kelly et.al. 2008, Hawkes 2009), to overindulge in hedonistic practices (Goulding et.al 2009) that include encouraging consumption of alcohol (Holt 2006) etc. It is also important to explore how consumers resist the categorizing of them as Sovereign Consumers through resistant consumption practices (Bekin, Carrigan & Szmigin 2005), exemplars of such practices include consumer engagement with the slow food movement and events such as the 'Burning Man Festival' (see Kozinets 2002). There is also an ethical dimension to the way in which we represent people, culture and places within marketing texts, and this concern is reflected in numerous debates that include the marketing conventions by which we represent local or indigenous people as attractions or servants (Dann 1996) or commodifying place, landscape (Davis 2005) heritage and culture (Middleton 2007) as such, marketing often provides negative or demeaning representations of cultures and societies. Our understanding of the impacts and ethics of marketing also needs to be informed by the cultural theory debates that surround Cultural or Neo Imperialism (Dávila 2012), Orientalism (Said 1995) and Cultural Commodification and that also includes physical cultural representations such as architecture and food (Gyimóthy & Mykletun 2013) in marketing texts. Such information also allows us to question the marketing practices of companies and organizations, to find some form of truth and to understand how 'Greenwashing' has become an accepted strategy in contemporary marketing practices (see Lyon & Maxwell 2006). This is more than just an idealistic academic debate, the need for companies to be seen as ethical and sustainable is becoming increasingly important in terms of maintaining marketing position, differentiating their product and investing in the continual building of their brand values. Failure to subscribe to the principles of ethical marketing, business practices and ensuring transparency can and will impact the bottom line as consumers continue to become increasingly aware of the impacts of the hospitality industry. Additionally, academics also have a responsibility to search for, theorize and discuss alternative marketing approaches and philosophies that lead to the generation of new theory and tools that can be utilized and applied by the hospitality industry.

CONCLUSION

This article forwards a more inclusive and balanced approach to contemporary hospitality marketing, this is achieved by adapting the traditional positivistic approach and weaving a culturally orientated framework into our understanding of marketing. The result of this weaving is to move towards a subject specific form of marketing practice that reflects the complexity of the contemporary hospitality industry and recognizes the 'significance', elements of the industry have for the individual consumer. Although this article may be classified as a conceptual paper, its motivations lie in the development and forwarding of a more informed and effective approach to marketing. Precept 1 of the philosophy leads us towards a greater understanding of the motivations, desires and the significance of hospitality within the individual's life, it enables us to truly understand our product. Precept 2 examines, the resources and knowledge the individual brings to the marketing process and then how they find utility and meaning within this. In other words understanding your consumer by moving beyond metrics drive approaches to segmentation. While Precept 3 provides a set of guidelines of how as marketers we should behave and how adopting a more sustainable or ethical approach to marketing can, and does link into the consumer decision-making process.

The adoption of this more holistic approach to hospitality marketing theory, enables marketers in their everyday practice to shape products, campaigns on a more personal or cultural level, this is important for a number of reasons from the more traditional tailoring of experiences for existing or potential customers to the imminent development of Web 3.0 or 'Semantic Web', whereby, search engines will understand and respond to individual complex human requests based on their meanings, and understanding of the consumer. As such, truly understanding your customer will become more important than ever before, and the continued dominance of positivistic traditions on its own will not generate the type of data required to effectively market in this new technological landscape. This 'understanding' of the individual, must be ontologically and semantically structured so that the relevant information is linked to individual consumers or groups of consumer's worldviews or axiological foundations. Marketing is becoming a more personal activity whereby we interact, build relationships and that consumers become interactive participants in the marketing process, rather than passive bystanders. Additionally, there still needs to be a further empirically based exploration of the relationship between the practicalities of incorporating the type of data generated by this more social science/interpretivistic approach into contemporary hospitality marketing practice. Additionally, there needs to further research undertaken on the application of anthropological, sociological and psychological methodologies and how these may be applied effectively within the sector. Hospitality research is at the forefront of many areas of commercial activity such as revenue management, however somewhat illogically within the arena of marketing the sector dogmatically continues to 'borrow' from other areas of general non-experientially based approaches and this is perpetuated by editorial policy within hospitality academic journals which stifle conceptual and philosophical debate. These more open and conceptual debates should challenge orthodoxies and forward the effectiveness and distinctiveness of hospitality marketing practices.

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